

life crosses the path of one. I have had that good fortune in getting to know Ben Cole of Savannah.

Ben runs the Chain Baseball Academy. For nearly two decades, he had trained thousands of boys in the competitive art of "America's Favorite Pastime." Ben takes youngsters of various walks of life and teaches them the fundamentals of hitting, pitching, and catching. Many go on to become star high school, college, and professional baseball players. It is no surprise that Chain Baseball has produced over 300 college level athletes and 44 professional, including two World Series pitchers!

However it is not just about baseball. It's about character building, teamwork, and excelling on and off the field. Ben's most important lesson for the parents is that if the kid doesn't want to be a baseball player: Don't force him. In today's society, sometimes parents can push their children too much. That takes the fun out of it for them and can hurt their confidence. Instead, parents should let them enjoy being kids. If they want to play baseball, fine, and if they don't, that's fine too. They have to want it for themselves, not their Moms and Dads.

Because of the amount of traveling required, playing baseball can be expensive. Not all families can afford the time and money involved. That's why Ben and Chain owner Buddy Meyer work hard to find financial aid for kids in need. The term "elite athlete" doesn't mean financially elite. They want the door to be open to all.

Ben also works patiently with Moms and Dads. He has a special place for women whose husbands are deployed. Chain Academy is less than a mile from Hunter Army Airfield, home of the 3rd ID. Often, Moms walk through the door with a boy whose dad is in Afghanistan or Iraq. Mom doesn't know much about baseball, but she's come to the right place. Ben makes sure her son, who has often just moved to town, is treated like family.

Finally, Ben leads by example. At 81 years old, he doesn't sit at the desk barking out instructions. He gets in the cage, picks up a bat, and shows his students how to swing, catch, or throw. And when the time allows, he puts on a batter's helmet and takes a few swings himself. With his perfect form he drives the ball hard and strong, proving to all he knows what he's doing.

Ben likes the great athlete but no more than the earnest athlete. No matter what the age, if a kid tries his best, Ben's there to help make him a better player. I can attest to that. I've seen him patiently spend hours coaching a fifty-six-year-old congressman. Even if there's little improvement, year by year, he's ready to help! His enthusiasm is contagious.

Ben's an optimist. He loves his country, his family, his favorite sport of baseball and the kids of all ages who play it. Star athletes come to the Chain all the time but nothing lights up his face as much as a grandchild.

In today's society, we have widespread obesity. In the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee, we spend as much time talking about obesity and exercise as hunger. We need more people like Ben who have kept themselves in shape. We need people to stay active physically, mentally, and spiritually. Think of the billions we could save in health care costs if more people took Ben's example. Finally, think how much more fun we'd have as a country if instead of just watching America's favorite pastime we would all play it.

May Ben and the Chain Baseball Academy keep up the good work and continue to inspire the rest of us for many years to come.

IRAN THREAT REDUCTION ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, let's be clear. Iran activities are troubling and our Nation must continue to work to build an international coalition to pressure and isolate Iran until it verifiably ends such activities. The policies we use to effect our goals are as important as the rhetoric about being tough on Iran.

I vote for this legislation while noting it has flaws that must be addressed in the other body, in cooperation with the Administration. I will speak to some of those needed changes in a minute. However, I think other provisions such as language targeting government officials who commit human rights abuses and the provisions aimed at stopping Iran's Revolutionary Guard from trying to evade current U.S. and multilateral sanctions make sense. When the U.S. and our international allies work together, our efforts on Iran, including sanctions and diplomacy, are more effective and stronger. The same can be said when the Congress and the Administration are working together.

We should not confuse support for this bill with the fact that there exists a vast divergence of views in this Congress on the best policy to deal with the threat posed by Iran. However, the Republican majority determines the schedule and has made a choice to bring this bill up under a procedure that prevents any Member with other ideas (either to make the bill stronger or weaker depending on your view) from making further changes to it.

Even with my yes vote, I believe this legislation is in need of improvement. Sending a strong message is one thing but enacting an effective policy that supports that message is another. And this bill must be improved so our policy can match the strong message.

Where can this bill be improved? I have long been concerned and I have expressed those concerns on this floor before about unilateral sanctions. Treasury Secretary Geithner said last year, "to be truly effective in ending Iran's proliferation activities and Iran's support for terrorism, we need to have in place a concerted, international approach. This is not something the United States can do alone. We need other countries to move with us." I concur wholeheartedly.

Yet, I know that the Administration has warned some provisions, like mandatory Iranian Central Bank Sanctions, may end up splintering the international coalition that it worked relentlessly to build as exemplified by passage of last year's UN Security Council Sanction Resolution. In a recent letter, Secretary Geithner made clear his concerns that sanctioning the Central Bank of Iran could negatively affect "many of our closest allies and largest trading partners." Again, the most likely to be adversely affected by this bill are our closest allies, the ones we depend on to pressure Iran.

Why would this be so? According to Secretary Geithner, "rather than motivating these countries to join us in increasing pressure on Iran, they are more likely to resent our actions and resist following our lead—a consequence that would serve the Iranians more than it harms them." The Administration has suggested ways to achieve the goals of this bill while ensuring we don't cripple the international coalition and consensus that it has worked so hard to build against Iran. Congress should listen. A piece of legislation that results in fewer countries working with us to isolate Iran and bring a verifiable end to its troubling nuclear activities is not a victory in my book.

Another provision in the bill—added in Committee—would prohibit U.S. diplomatic or other contact, whether intentionally or incidentally, with certain Iranian government officials. Whether intended by its authors or not, concerns have been raised about negative impact on our diplomatic efforts. I urge the Senate to remove this provision. It adds nothing to the bill's effectiveness but brings unnecessary confusion and controversy.

H.R. 1905 would also require the President to report, after its enactment, on negative impacts the bill would cause on our relations with friendly nations and on the U.S. economy. I think this gets it backwards. We need to get a better bill that addresses those concerns up front, rather than wait until after we have shattered the international coalition.

Again, I support a strong and unified international effort against Iran with U.S. leadership but my continued support for this legislation requires those in Senate (who will have the opportunity to amend it unlike the House did) to work with the Administration to address possible negative impacts on our diplomatic efforts, economy, and the Iranian people. This occurred last year to get CISADA passed and I hope we repeat it again this time.

Lastly, no one should take passage of this legislation as a sign that diplomacy is off the table and that the only option going forward is a military strike. We need to invest in diplomacy—maybe now more than ever—and to continue to work with our international allies and others interested in peace and stability in the region.

TRIBUTE TO THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES AND INTELLIGENCE SERVICES

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 15, 2011

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to the United States Armed Forces and Intelligence Services on the occasion of the successful completion of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Nine years ago our country embarked on a military campaign to end the tyrannical rule of Saddam Hussein, bring the Iraqi people freedom and make the world a safer place. The road has not been an easy one to travel but through it all our U.S. service members have persevered. From the insurgency in the al Anbar Province to the violence in Baghdad, to the ultimate success of the surge, our troops did not lose sight of the goal. As the enemy

changed their tactics, our military, with the help of our intelligence community, adapted and overcame. While there have been many that have questioned America's ability to commit to a long war, a decade later proves our determination as well as assures our Iraqi friends that they have a lasting ally in the United States.

While we commemorate the successful completion of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the challenges remain for Iraq just as it would for any nascent democracy. Today, let us recommit ourselves diplomatically to Iraq and ensure that as the country experiences the growing pains of a new democratic state, they can turn to the U.S. for guidance and help.

Today also serves as the successful completion of Operation Iraqi Freedom which will be remembered in history, along with the almost 4,500 service members that were killed in action in Iraq. Today we also reaffirm a solemn promise that we will always remember their sacrifice and that they gave up the most precious of all things—life. We acknowledge that the death and eternal absence of a soldier, sailor, airman, Coast Guardsman or Marine does not exist in a vacuum—it is a wound that will never truly heal in the hearts of all those who loved them. We honor them as individuals—they are people who cannot be replaced but whose memory lives on whenever their story is told. So as we close this chapter, let us promise to honor our war dead every day, tell their stories and remember their sacrifice. In honor of all those who died in service to our country in Operation Iraqi Freedom, I would like to read the names of those killed from my congressional district.

Gunnery Sgt Jeffrey Bohr, United States Marine Corps

First Lieutenant Todd Bryant, United States Army

Sergeant Ryan Young, United States Army
Private First Class Brian Cutter, United States Marine Corps

Sergeant Eliu Miersandoval, United States Army

Lance Corporal Rafael Suarez, United States Marine Corps

Corporal Billy Gomez, United States Army
Specialist Jonathan Castro, United States Army

Corporal Jason Morrow, United States Marine Corps
Private First Class Jason Franco, United States Marine Corps

Sergeant Rhys Klasno, California National Guard
Sergeant Thomas McFall, United States Army

Specialist Cameron Payne, United States Army

Specialist Joshua Modgling, United States Army

Specialist Eric Holke, California National Guard

Staff Sergeant Eric Cottrell, United States Army

Staff Sergeant Alejandro Ayala, United States Air Force

Specialist Armando A. De La Paz, United States Army

Private Grant Cotting, United States Army
Lance Corporal David James Hogan, United States Marine Corps

Staff Sergeant Michael Cardenaz, United States Army

Senior Airman Michael Hinkle, United States Air Force

Sergeant Aaron Blasjo, United States Army
Sergeant Andrew Tobin, United States Army
God Bless our Troops and God Bless America.

CONGRATULATING MS. MADIE TILLMAN

HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 15, 2011

Mr. TURNER of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize a distinguished member of the General Daniel "Chappie" James American Legion Auxiliary Post 776, located in my congressional district, for the service she has given to her community.

Ms. Madie Tillman received the Member of the Year Award for the Department of Ohio during the American Legion Auxiliary 2011 Department Convention, for her exceptional contributions to the American Legion Auxiliary. She is a long-time volunteer at the Dayton VA Medical Center. Last year, she raised \$500 for a Christmas party for veterans and their families.

As the widow of a veteran, Ms. Tillman has been a dedicated, generous and unselfish advocate for veterans and their families. After learning that veterans in the Homeless Program at the Dayton VA were in need of book bags for their classes at Sinclair Community College, she collected bags for the veterans from local charitable organizations.

In January, she collected over one hundred 2011 calendars after learning that our troops deployed overseas wanted them so they could mark off the days until they could return home. The calendars were shipped to our troops by the Blue Star Mothers. An associate member of the Blue Star Mothers of America, she also donates to their "Trick or Treat for Troops" program, and other activities.

I appreciate this opportunity to recognize a good and compassionate citizen, Ms. Madie Tillman, for her service to our community and our Nation's veterans.

IN HONOR OF THE RETURN OF OUR WOUNDED WARRIORS TO AMERICA

HON. CHARLES W. BOUSTANY, JR.

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 15, 2011

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of our wounded warriors returning home from abroad. Several times a week, wounded American soldiers return to the United States, landing at Andrews Air Force Base. Some have short layovers before going to their homes or medical facilities around the country. Others remain in the Washington, DC, region to get care and recover. Whatever their final destination, I ask that our thoughts and prayers go out to the members of our Armed Forces and their families.

Their sacrifices to our nation will never be forgotten. In honor of their service and in hopes for their recovery I ask that this poem penned by Albert Caswell be placed in the RECORD.

IN HONOR NOW

In . . .

In Honor Now!

As here we stand so very proud!

So very proud of all of you so now . . .

With open arms, as here we stand with hearts so very warm . . . All in our hearts of love, so very full . . . beating loud!

Waiting all for you!

Welcome Home!

As you come down into view . . .

All as America's most brilliant of all hues!

Her Armed Forces so very tried and true!

As all of our hearts so run to you . . .

Oh can you but not so hear them now!

Welcome Home!

With open arms, all in our hearts of love for you so very warm!

Our most precious of all daughters and sons . . .

Who are but honor bound, as are all of these ones!

Who all so stood, for what was good and true! While, all in that face . . . of deep dark death and war, as did you!

Welcome Home!

As all for God and Country Tis of Thee, you would so die and bleed!

As you so cried, as they so laid your brothers and sisters down to rest!

All into that soft cold quiet ground, were but lain all of America's Best so down!

All in your tears, as we so saw what your love for each other so said!

And That Blood That Binds You, so ran red!

All In Such Honor Now, as here we so stand so very proud!

All in how your fine lives have so read!

Can you but not so hear all of our hearts for you so pound?

Welcome Home, now to where you so belong! With Open Arms, as here we stand with our love for you so very warm . . .

So very strong!

Back home again, with your families as the tears begin . . .

Whose, fine hearts have so cried . . . and so worried all of the time!

We pray to end their most restless sleep, and so let them all so find peace!

For they are but America's Quiet Heroes, The Families as so are all of these!

Because, all of you and your families' fine lives . . . have but been a song!

A song of such Faith and Courage!

One of such Strength In Honor, who this our Nation has so nourished!

With Open Arms we now so cry, Welcome Home!

Far from all of that darkness of most dreaded war, and all its grave harm!

As now, you all can so rest!

As a time to so rebuild . . . to so replenish, and once again your courage to test!

As you rebuild with what you have left . . .

As all our hearts are now so filled, with such love and respect . . . it's now time to heal America's Best!

For all of you and your families, may our Lord God So Bless . . .

For you have a new battle now to begin!

And oh yes, American's finest ones . . . you shall win!

Welcome Home, for this our Nation you have so blessed!

As now you wear that most noblest title of them all!

As an American Hero, whose magnificent hearts upon a battlefield of honor stood tall!

With . . .

With Open Arms . . .

Welcome Home! As to all of you, our hearts so roam!

In Honor Now, Here We So Stand With Open Arms!